

MAY 8 1970

As a campus based organization, with an allegiance to a much larger community, it is imperative that we state our position on the National Student Association Strike, and its counterpart on this campus.

1. Kent State

The death of the four Kent State students was a very tragic event for Kent State and the parents of those students. However it would be hypocritical of this organization and its members to pretend that these deaths have rendered us emotionally bankrupt. For many of us, and the vast majority of Black people, death and suffering has become a very real part of life.

"On February 8, police and national guardmen in Orangeburg, S.C., opened fire on a group of black college students gathered around a bonfire on the campus of South Carolina State College. Three students were shot to death, 37 more wounded. Two of the dead students were later found to have been shot in the back, as were a majority of the wounded. One student died of loss of blood after he was refused admission to segregate Orangeburg Regional Hospital. Two weeks later, police shot into a crowd of Black student's demonstrating at Mississippi's Alcorn A&M College. Six were wounded, two hospitalized."

Commonweal, 19 April 1968

For Black people the problem of death is part of the sobering reality of our survival.

2. National Strike

We are in sympathy with the stated purpose of the National Strike:

- a. The release of "political prisoners in the United States. (The Black Panthers, The Chicago Conspiracy Defendants, and others);
- b. An end to escalation of the Vietnam War; and
- c. A halt in university complicity with the military establishment.

We do, however, feel the necessity to distinguish between means and ends. We do not support the abandonment of all academic activities for an indefinite length of time. We feel that a truly sincere commitment involves a personal rather than an institutional sacrifice.

May 6, 1970

B. S. M. U. Alternatives and Rationals

1. On Monday, May 11, classes should resume. Suspension of classes for the rest of the year will serve only to dissipate any energy this community possesses.
2. B. S. M. U. will make available information on the persecution of the Black Panthers. It is strongly urged that the faculty allot a portion of their remaining class hours for discussion on all the issues connected with the National Strike. B.S.M.U. is undertaking to inform Middlebury parents and trustees of the plight of the Black Panther party. Information will also be broadcast to the student body starting Friday, May 8 at 10 p.m. on WRMC.
3. There will be a community-wide (including parents) campaign to raise money for the defense of the Black Panthers.
4. We strongly urge that all students who believe it impossible for them to complete the academic year to make it arrangements to leave school. It is our hope that they use this time to implement the ideas which have been stated in the platform of the National Strike. As Black people we feel that we are the group that will suffer the most from the curtailment of this academic year.

Finally, we wish to emphasize the need for personal initiative, sacrifice, direction, and discipline in your actions in the immediate future. The responsibility to seek rational, yet meaningful actions in reply to the issues that confront us is, in the end, a personal one.